

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 L-03 PM-05 SP-02 INR-07 /045 W
-----024536 281834Z /41

P 281804Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4354

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FOR RPM, EUR/CE, L/EUR, L/PM

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MPOL, ETEL, MARR, GW, US
SUBJECT: U.S. PROBLEMS WITH FRG BUNDESPOST AND SCHEDULED
WASHINGTON VISIT IN JANUARY OF BUNDESPOST STATE
SECRETARY ELIAS

REFS: A) BONN 21293; B) STATE 301686; C) BONN 04451

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT THE JANUARY
VISIT OF FRG BUNDESPOST MINISTRY STATE SECRETARY ELIAS TO
WASHINGTON BE USED AS OCCASION TO RAISE THE PROBLEMS
THE US FORCES ARE EXPERIENCING WITH THE BUNDESPOST CON-
. CERNING TELEPHONES, PROBLEMS THAT ARE NOW PENDING AT THE EMBASSY

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FOREIGN OFFICE LEVEL. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IF THESE
MATTERS ARE NOT RAISED WITH ELIAS IN WASHINGTON, SUCH
OMISSION WILL BE INTERPRETED BY BUNDESPOST AS MEANING
THAT THEY ARE NOT VIEWED AS URGENT AND OF POLITICAL
IMPORTANCE BY STATE AND DOD. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBOFF RECENTLY SPOKE WITH PROFESSOR RUMPF, FONOFF
LEGAL SECTION, AND ASKED HIM WHAT HE HAD HEARD FROM THE
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BUNDESPOST IN RESPONSE TO THE EMBASSY'S TWO NOTES OF
OCTOBER 13 AND THE MULTILATERAL MEETING OF THE SAME DAY
(SEE EXTENSIVE BACKGROUND PAPERS POUCHED BY EMBASSY TO
EUR/CE AND L DURING 1977, AND BONN 17124).
RUMPF SAID THAT THE RESPONSE
OF THE BUNDESPOST TO THE AA CONCERNING THE ISSUES
COVERED IN THE NOTES (RHEIN/MAIN PRIVATE BRANCH EXCHANGE

(PBX) AND OUT-OF-AREA TIE-LINES) WAS "ADAMANT." HE SAID THAT IN VIEW OF THIS UNHELPFUL RESPONSE HE WAS TAKING THE MATTER UP WITH THE "POLITISCHE ABTEILUNG." EMBASSY TAKES THIS TO MEAN THAT RUMPF IS SEEKING FONOFF POLITICAL SECTION BACKING IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO ENGAGE THE BUNDESPOST ON THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM, NOT ONLY THE LEGAL ONES. HE IMPLIED THAT HE WOULD NEED TO MEET WITH BUNDESPOST OFFICIALS BEFORE KNOWING HOW TO PROCEED. EMBASSY ASSUMES RUMPF HAS RUN INTO THE SAME STONE-WALLING THAT THE US FORCES EXPERIENCED WITH THE BUNDESPOST. EMBASSY SUGGESTED TO RUMPF THAT HE LET THE EMBASSY KNOW IF HE BELIEVES EMBASSY CAN HELP OUT, FOR EXAMPLE BY HAVING POLITICAL COUNSELOR OR MINISTER APPROACH FONOFF ON THIS MATTER.

2. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT EUCOM ATTORNEY (MR. LEWIS ARON) IS FINDING IT MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT TO KEEP EUCOM FROM SENDING ANOTHER LETTER TO THE AMBASSADOR FROM GENERAL HUYSER OR AN EQUIVALENT. THIS IS PARTICULARLY SO AS THE OLD RHEIN/MAIN PBX COULD BREAK DOWN IRREPARABLY ANY TIME AND THE NEW SIEMENS PBX IS HOOKED UP AND READY TO OPERATE ANY TIME THE BUNDESPOST SEALS AND BLOCKS ARE REMOVED. OBVIOUSLY, IT WOULD BE INTOLERABLE FOR RHEIN/MAIN TERMINAL TO BE UNABLE TO FUNCTION INTERNALLY OR TO THE OUTSIDE IN TERMS OF TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS. MONTHS AGO THE US FORCES ASKED BUNDESPOST BY LETTER TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REMOVE BLOCKS ON THE NEW PBX TO PERMIT ITS USE. THE US FORCES SUGGESTED THAT THIS BE DONE WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO THE LEGAL DISPUTE AND WITHOUT CONSTITUTING A PRECEDENT. ALTERNATELY, THE FORCES OFFERED TO REPLACE THE PHONE EQUIPMENT INTERCONNECTED THROUGH THAT NEW PBX WITH EQUIPMENT CONFORMING TO BUNDESPOST REGULATIONS (GERMAN EQUIPMENT) SHOULD IT ULTIMATELY BE DETERMINED THAT THE BUNDESPOST REGULATIONS ARE APPLICABLE TO THE FORCES. THIS PROPOSAL EVOKED NO RESPONSE FROM THE BUNDESPOST.

3. WE NOTE THAT STATE SECRETARY ELIAS OF THE BUNDESPOST MINISTRY IS VISITING WASHINGTON JANUARY 30-31 WITH STATE DEPARTMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPOINTMENTS (SEE REFTELS). THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD NOT LET ELIAS LEAVE WASHINGTON WITHOUT MENTION BEING MADE THERE OF THE PROBLEMS THE US FORCES, THE OTHER SENDING STATES AND NOW THE RESPECTIVE EMBASSIES, ARE HAVING ON THE OUT-OF-AREA TIE-LINES PROBLEM (ELIAS SIGNED THE 1972-73 AGREEMENT FOR THE BUNDESPOST), AND THE IMPOSSIBLE POSITION THAT THE BUNDESPOST IS PUTTING USAFE INTO AT RHEIN/MAIN THROUGH ITS REFUSAL TO PERMIT THE NEW RHEIN/

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 L-03 PM-05 SP-02 INR-07 /045 W
-----024398 281836Z /41
P 281804Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
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MAIN PBX TO BE USED WITHOUT REPLACEMENT BY GERMAN
EQUIPMENT OF ALL TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT AT RHEIN/MAIN
HOOKED UP INTERNALLY THROUGH IT OR TO BE CONNECTED TO
THE OUTSIDE LINES THROUGH THAT NEW PBX. POSSIBLY DOD
REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD BE PRESENT TO GIVE SOME FLAVOR
TO USG EXASPERATION AT THE BUNDESPOST POSITION,
PARTICULARLY ON THIS MATTER.

4. IF WE FAIL TO SAY ANYTHING TO ELIAS ABOUT AT LEAST
THESE TWO MATTERS WHILE HE IS IN WASHINGTON, THIS MAY
BE TAKEN AS A SIGNAL BY THOSE BUNDESPOST OFFICIALS
CONCERNED WITH THESE MATTERS THAT THE PROBLEMS RAISED
IN THE EMBASSY'S NOTES AND BY THE SENDING STATES BY
ARON'S MAY 4 LETTER ARE ONLY LOCAL ONES THAT THE US
MILITARY HAS INFLATED AND ESCALATED TO THE EMBASSY-FONOFF
LEVEL WITHOUT ANY REAL WASHINGTON INTEREST. SUCH AN
IMPRESSION CANNOT BUT UNDERCUT POSSIBLE FONOFF EFFORTS
TO RAISE THESE MATTERS ON OUR BEHALF WITH THE BUNDESPOST
AT THE POLICY LEVEL.

5. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE ISSUES ARE CLEAR
FROM THE MATERIAL SENT TO EUR/CE AND L SO THAT NO
FURTHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION FROM THE EMBASSY SHOULD
BE NECESSARY TO RAISE THIS MATTER WITH ELIAS. SHOULD
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IT BE DEEMED USEFUL THE EMBASSY COULD ENCOURAGE EUCOM TO HAVE THE APPROPRIATE PEOPLE AT DOD MAKE THEMSELVES AVAILABLE.

6. THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT STAFF MEMBERS OF HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION RECENTLY REVIEWED WITH THE US FORCES IN THE FRG THE NEED FOR APPROPRIATIONS FOR A NEW PBX FOR RAMSTEIN, AND WERE INFORMED OF THE RHEIN/MAIN PBX PROBLEM. WE HAVE LEARNED THAT MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ITSELF, INCLUDING ITS CHAIRMAN, CONGRESSMAN GUNN MACKAY AND 4 OTHERS, EXPECT WITH SUBCOMMITTEE STAFF MEMBERS HUGO AND ALLEN TO VISIT USAF AT RAMSTEIN THE SECOND WEEK OF JANUARY 1978 TO OBTAIN FURTHER DETAILS ON THIS PROBLEM. BRIEFING FOR THEM IS BEING PREPARED IN DOD BY BGEN. DOUBLEDAY, DIRECTOR, COMMAND AND CONTROL & COMMUNICATIONS IN OFFICE OF ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR COMMUNICATIONS (PENTAGON EXTENSIONS 56324 AND 56325). THEY ALSO WISH TO OBTAIN A BRIEFING ON THE OUT-OF-AREA TIE-LINES PROBLEM.

7. GENERAL TELEPHONE PROBLEMS WITH BUNDESPOST ARE BEING HANDLED IN DOD BY JOHN WHEALER, COUNSEL FOR DEFENSE COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY (PENTAGON EXTENSION 22009).

8. EMBASSY REQUESTS TO BE INFORMED BY MID-JANUARY OF DEPARTMENT'S INTENTIONS CONCERNING STATE SECRETARY ELIAS' VISIT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 28-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Handling Restrictions:
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TAGS: MPOL, ETEL, MARR, GE, US
To: STATE
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